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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 22nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DINU (Romania)

later: Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria)
(Vice-Chairman)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 4.40 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 102: FINANCIAL REPORTS AND AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, AND REPORTS OF THE BOARD OF AUDITORS (continued) (A/47/5 and Corr.1 (vols. I, II and III) and Add.1-3, Add.4 and Corr.1, Add.5-7 and Add.8 and Corr.1, A/47/315, A/47/460, A/47/500 and A/47/510)

1. Mr. PRESSLER (United States of America) said that unless the instances of mismanagement described in the reports of the auditors were immediately corrected, the capacity of the United Nations to respond to global problems and the capacity of its supporters to provide the necessary resources would be undermined. The series of articles in The Washington Post had had an enormous impact in United States government circles. It was his personal opinion that it would be more difficult for the United States to approve funding for the United Nations with a Democratic president, for a Republican president could automatically count on the support of conservative Republican senators and representatives who might otherwise be more likely to oppose United Nations funding.

2. An important part of the audit process was the response by the Organization to identify weaknesses in its management structure. A concrete action plan was needed in order to ensure that the Secretariat addressed those problems urgently. More vigorous testing of the Organization's internal controls was also required. Instead of providing more information on specific cases of mismanagement and abuse, the Board of Auditors could undertake a complete review of internal controls to determine their adequacy and whether they were being adhered to. The General Assembly should require the Secretariat to provide, at a resumed forty-seventh session, a detailed action plan indicating the corrective action and a timetable for its implementation. The Secretariat should include explanations in cases where it did not agree with the Board's recommended solution and should provide its own alternative proposal. The General Assembly should also request the Board to analyse the efficiency of the Secretariat's measures and to submit its findings to the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 112: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/47/416, A/47/508; A/C.5/47/5, A/C.5/47/6, A/C.5/47/9, A/C.5/47/14 and A/C.5/47/20; A/C.5/46/2, A/C.5/46/7, A/C.5/46/9, A/C.5/46/13 and A/C.5/46/16; A/46/326 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/47/140 and Add.1 and A/47/168 and Add.1)

3. Mr. CISSE (Senegal) said that the success of the current efforts to restructure and revitalize the United Nations system would require the support of a competent, serious and sufficiently motivated staff. That in turn would require a good personnel policy which paid particular attention to recruitment procedures, a rational career structure and the staff's working conditions, and had well-structured training and further-training programmes.

4. Personnel questions were so important that they had to be considered together. His delegation would address only a few of them: the composition

(Mr. Cisse, Senegal)

of the Secretariat, the improvement of the status of women, and respect for the privileges and immunities of staff members.

5. With regard to the composition of the Secretariat, the efforts made to comply with the principles governing staff recruitment and employment, under Article 101 of the Charter, were welcome. It was right to place special emphasis on skills, qualifications and integrity as the basis of recruitment. Nevertheless, those principles should not be allowed to have an adverse impact on the application of the principles of equitable geographical distribution or on the satisfactory representation of Member States. The tables contained in the report on the composition of the Secretariat (A/47/416) pointed to conclusions about the number of staff members in senior posts from the developing countries, in particular Africa. Of the 19 under-secretary-general posts only two were held by Africans, from English-speaking countries. The only African among the 15 staff members at the assistant secretary-general level had already left the Secretariat. Of the 80 staff members at the D-2 level only 14 were Africans, six from three English-speaking countries and eight from seven French-speaking countries, while five of them came from countries of North Africa. Of the 242 D-1 posts only 53 were held by Africans, 17 French-speaking and 13 from North Africa. Lastly, out of 482 staff members at the P-5 level only 87 were Africans, 27 from French-speaking countries and 26 from North Africa. Those examples showed that the representation of Africa was not only poor but also, from the standpoint of language and geography, suffered from an imbalance which would have to be corrected by increased recruitment of senior staff from French-speaking and English-speaking countries.

6. Considerable efforts had been made to improve the status of women in the Secretariat, with the number of women holding posts subject to geographical distribution increasing by more than 1.4 per cent from 29.2 per cent in June 1991 to 30.6 per cent in June 1992. However, the efforts must be stepped up in order to attain the target of 35 per cent by 1995. The number of women in senior posts must also be augmented, for as of 30 June 1992 there was not a single woman under-secretary-general and only one assistant secretary-general, and it was not certain that that post would be retained. The number of women at the D-2 level had remained unchanged at 10, and at the D-1 level had increased only from 22 to 26; of the 482 staff members at the P-5 level only 94 were women.

7. The report on the improvement of status of women in the Secretariat (A/47/508) showed that the proportion of women from Asia, the Pacific, western Europe and Latin America did not exceed 30 per cent. The representation of African women was a source of concern, for of the 10 women at the D-2 level only one was African, from North Africa, and there were no women from sub-Saharan Africa; of the 26 women holding D-1 posts only two were African; of the 94 women at the P-5 level only eight were African, three of them from North Africa and five from English-speaking countries. The proportion of African women in senior posts was not only very small overall but also

(Mr. Cisse, Senegal)

imbalanced from the standpoint of language and geography. Africa, in particular black and French-speaking Africa, was clearly the poor relation in the recruitment process.

8. His delegation believed that the privileges and immunities of staff members should be scrupulously respected by Member States. However, such privileges and immunities must not be used wrongly or serve purposes totally different from the ones for which they had been envisaged or granted. They applied to staff members only within the framework of the activities connected with their functional powers or status. All those concerns had been clearly stated in resolution 45/240 in which the General Assembly, mindful of the differences which usually arose with respect to allegations of failure to observe the privileges and immunities of staff members, requested the Secretary-General to include in all his reports the views of the Member States concerned; that provision would make it possible to avoid the tendentious presentation of the facts.

9. With regard to the administration of justice in the Secretariat and the reforms requested in General Assembly resolution 45/239 B, it was important to establish an effective system for informal settlements of staff grievances and a well-functioning disciplinary system.

10. The procedure for secondment from government service must be governed by the reciprocal interests of the seconding civil service, the receiving organizations and the individuals concerned. His delegation had no major difficulty in accepting the legislative changes proposed in the report on secondment from government service (A/C.5/46/9). However, paragraph (c) of the annex on letters of appointment should be revised, for the existence and validity of the secondment of a staff member for a specified period ought not to be determined by the letter of appointment. Furthermore, the period stated in the letter should be consistent with the period of secondment envisaged by the seconding civil service, and any extension should be considered in consultation with that civil service.

11. Mr. ELIASHEV (Israel), referring to the report of the Secretary-General on the privileges and immunities of officials (A/C.5/47/14), assured the Committee that Israel fully appreciated the concern for the well-being of employees of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) who were at present detained. Eight of the persons appearing in the list in the Secretary-General's report had been released between 16 November 1990 and 12 August 1992, and the Secretariat had been given the details.

12. The people appearing in the list had been duly detained pursuant to application of the law enforced in the administered areas, as a result of their involvement in illegal activities. The mere fact that a person was a United Nations staff member was not, in and of itself, sufficient to provide immunity from due application of the law in force, especially when the illegal

(Mr. Eliashev, Israel)

activities involved disruption of public order, violence and terror. In that context, Article 100 (1) of the United Nations Charter required that staff members should refrain from any action which might reflect on their position as international officials responsible only to the Organization.

13. The Israeli authorities were making considerable efforts to caution local residents of the areas used by UNRWA to avoid activities involving violations of law and public order and had requested UNRWA to reconsider its practice of employing staff who had been involved, sometimes repeatedly, in such activities. However, those requests had not been heeded.

14. The persons detained were granted all requisite facilities, including constant medical supervision and treatment as necessary, the right to be visited by family and attorneys, and other such privileges, including the right to apply to an Appeals Board and to have their case reviewed by the Supreme Court of Israel sitting as a High Court of Justice. Trials in the military courts were, as a general rule, open to the public and there was no impediment to the presence at such trials of United Nations representatives.

15. He emphasized that the individuals in detention had been detained on account of their involvement in hostile activities, with a view to preventing their involvement in future hostile activities and protecting the safety and security of the population. Their detention had no connection whatsoever with their professional activities but only with actions which violated their functions as United Nations officials.

16. Mr. AL-NUSUF (Bahrain) said that he was glad that attention was being concentrated on fair treatment for the underrepresented countries, in accordance with resolution 45/239 and earlier resolutions of the General Assembly, as part of the current trend towards strengthening cooperation among countries with a view to achieving interdependence and understanding and eliminating all obstacles which might create imbalances.

17. Bahrain, together with 28 other countries, was in the unrepresented category referred to in paragraph 15 of the Secretary-General's report (A/47/416). To succeed so far as possible in achieving equitable geographical distribution in accordance with Article 101 of the Charter, officials must be from unrepresented countries. To that end, when vacancy notices were sent to unrepresented or underrepresented countries, the Secretariat should allow sufficient or longer time for receiving applications, so that delegations had sufficient time to send the applications to their respective capitals and receive nominees.

18. Some posts were monopolized by certain groups of countries. The principle of equal opportunity should be observed and justice done on the basis of efficiency, competence and integrity, while avoiding imbalances in distribution. It was very important to establish equitable rules for promotion, and his delegation hoped that the time would come when all

(Mr. Al-Nusuf, Bahrain)

countries were represented both within their desirable ranges and in high-level positions.

19. Mr. TEMEL (Turkey) recalled that, in its resolution 45/240, the General Assembly had called on all Member States to respect the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and related organizations. The Assembly had also called on the Secretary-General to continue to act as the focal point in promoting and ensuring the observance of the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and related organizations.

20. At a time when the organizations of the United Nations system were undertaking new and sometimes very dangerous tasks, respect for the privileges and immunities of the personnel was highly important. According to the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/47/14), in the period from 1 July 1991 to 30 June 1992 there had been 11 fatalities among staff members belonging to different organizations in the course of peace-keeping and humanitarian operations. His delegation deeply regretted those fatalities and urged the Secretary-General to take the necessary action to ensure the safety and protection of United Nations missions. However, it shared the view of the Secretary-General that primary responsibility for the safety and protection of the staff rested with the host Governments and other governmental authorities. In that connection, although it was encouraging that the number of cases of arrest and detention of officials had decreased, there were still instances of the arrest, detention or abduction of officials, which was intolerable.

21. The principle of equitable geographical distribution of posts deserved special attention, since the structure of the staff should reflect and preserve the international character of the United Nations. However, there were still many unrepresented or underrepresented States, which was unjustifiable. As could be seen from table B in document A/47/416, the degree of representation of Member States had remained fairly stable in the last five years, which indicated little or no improvement in the direction of a more equitable geographical distribution of Professional staff in the Secretariat. Between 1988 and 1991, the percentage of States within range was only about 65 per cent. The situation was the same with respect to the distribution of staff at senior and policy-formulating levels of the Secretariat. As could be seen from table C, the percentage of high-level posts occupied by staff from developing countries and others had remained more or less constant over the previous five years, and the situation of developing countries in regard to D-2 and ASG posts had actually deteriorated. His delegation hoped that the Secretary-General would take more effective measures to ensure equitable geographical distribution of Secretariat posts.

22. With regard to the Secretary-General's decision to suspend external recruitment for posts in the Professional category until further notice, although his delegation was aware of the ongoing restructuring efforts, it

(Mr. Temel, Turkey)

believed that the suspension would continue the current biased geographical distribution of Professional staff for an unspecified period. If the vacant posts were to be filled only by internal candidates, it would be impossible to achieve a more equitable geographical distribution of posts, while a large number of Member States were either unrepresented or underrepresented. Turkey hoped that the Secretary-General had a concrete plan to overcome that situation.

23. According to the report on alternative options for desirable ranges for the geographical distribution of staff in the Professional category and above (A/C.5/46/2), three factors were taken into account in the distribution of geographical posts: membership, population and contribution. His delegation believed that greater importance should be given to the population factor by increasing its percentage weight.

24. It was important to improve the status of women in the Secretariat. Despite the provisions of General Assembly resolution 45/239 C, there were still very few women in high-level posts. Accordingly, it was essential to increase the number of women in the Secretariat, especially at the D-1 level and above.

25. Mr. RAZI (Afghanistan) said that the balance and equitable geographical representation of the staff of the United Nations system was an issue of crucial importance. Unfortunately, despite the efforts that had been made, the situation had not improved sufficiently to satisfy the interest of each Member State since, as of 30 June 1992, there were still 29 unrepresented and 21 underrepresented Member States. It was necessary to increase the appointment of staff from unrepresented and underrepresented countries to the level required for equitable geographical distribution, due regard being given to the principles of efficiency, competence and integrity.

26. Afghanistan was one of the underrepresented Member States and was entitled to four more posts for candidates from its country. So far as the temporary restrictions permitted, the Secretariat should give due consideration to the nominees submitted by Afghanistan.

27. Afghanistan fully shared the concern of the Secretary-General and the staff representatives regarding the safety and security of United Nations personnel. Member States had an obligation to ensure the security of the staff and their residences, as well as the premises and installations of the United Nations, in close cooperation with the authorities of the offices concerned. His Government had tried constantly to provide means of protection and to ensure the security of all United Nations agencies and other international organizations. He reiterated his Government's determination to spare no effort to provide the staff with security as well as proper living and working conditions.

28. With regard to the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations, his delegation urged the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to

(Mr. Razi, Afghanistan)

achieve the goals set in resolution 45/125, so that the overall participation rate for women would rise to 35 per cent by 1995. In recruiting staff members to the Professional category, the particular circumstances under which nominees of the developing countries, especially the least developed, should be taken into consideration, without prejudice to the competitive examination, which should continue to be a sound factor for improving the representation of women in the Secretariat.

29. Mr. LAWSON (Sierra Leone) said that the quality and efficiency of any organization, including the United Nations, depended largely on the men and women working there, whose service became the most important factor determining the outcome of its activities. As the responsibilities which Member States required of the United Nations increased, so also did their expectations for optimum performance. At times it might appear that Member States were engaged in a contest of wills: insisting on a leaner and more focused Secretariat, yet demanding that the multiplying mandates should be discharged utilizing the existing financial and human resources.

30. If the aspirations of all Member States to a safer and more prosperous world were to be realized, staff members must have the necessary skills and expertise. In that connection, the measures taken by the Secretariat in order to tailor the skill-acquiring process to the complex and changing needs of the Organization at all levels, as elaborated in document A/C.5/47/9, were important. In particular, the emphasis being put on developing the supervisory ability of managerial staff at the higher levels was very much in tune with modern management techniques. It was important to achieve greater employee-environment compatibility.

31. Undoubtedly, the success of the comprehensive management development plan would depend on the level of budgetary resources allocated to it. The 0.29 per cent of resources being devoted to training within the budget was not adequate and his delegation would be grateful for an indication from the Secretariat as to how they intended to overcome that hurdle. One solution would be for Member States, including Sierra Leone, to pay their contributions. Despite the recruitment freeze, some vacancies were being filled. It would be helpful if the Secretariat could indicate the criteria being used to fill those posts and keep Member States informed of the progress of the overall training programme. No less important was the matter of providing staff members with skills in selected areas such as technological innovations, linguistic and communication capabilities, peace-keeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding and even orientation for newly recruited personnel. His delegation took note of the training programmes envisaged in two of the regional commissions and expressed its appreciation to the Government of Japan for its valuable contribution to that exercise.

32. Closely linked with training was the indispensable factor of career development in a system where performance and productivity were rewarded and high motivation maintained. Mobility in a system as complex as the United

(Mr. Lawson, Sierra Leone)

Nations was always a challenge. The degree to which demands for encouraging talent and honing diversified skills in-house and introducing "fresh blood" would depend on how the balance could be struck between present needs and future orientation. It was unlikely that the fine balance could be achieved within the time-frame projected in document A/C.5/47/6 given the recruitment hiatus. Nor should too great expectations be placed on the plan presented in figure 1, showing components within the career development structure which the Integrated Management Information System would support, should a questionmark continue to hang over the recruitment component. Whatever the case might be, it was to be hoped that the final outcome would not be a closed, unevenly weighted system unresponsive to the needs of staff members for career advancement.

33. If the comprehensive approach to career development that had been proposed was to foster the emergence of a taut, efficient and harmonious Secretariat, there must be a growing retreat from discriminatory practices such as emolument subsidies and tax assessments of their nationals on the part of some Member States; the administration of justice must be transparent, even-handed and swift and must draw increasingly upon less costly methods of redress; and vertical channels of communication must be improved day by day to enhance coordination and encourage optimum performance within the system.

34. His delegation was encouraged that modest gains had been made in the status of women in the Secretariat, but was unrelated considering that the increase for posts subject to geographical distribution from June 1991 to June 1992, if maintained annually, would still be insufficient to meet the 1995 target of 35 per cent.

35. The protection and safety of officials of the United Nations system was of paramount importance to the manner in which the organizations in the system would operate in coming years. Given the increasing responsibilities being conferred on the United Nations by Member States, especially in the area of peace-keeping, staff members would inevitably have greater exposure to dangerous or even life-threatening situations. However, where the likelihood existed that staff members would be put in harm's way while engaged in their normal duties of relief or humanitarian activity in volatile environments, every care should be taken to minimize the risks. In that regard, Sierra Leone supported the Secretary-General's recommendation in document A/C.5/47/14 concerning the Security Council's options in such situations. In addition, his delegation paid homage to the 11 men and women who had lost their lives in 1992 (A/C.5/47/14, para. 7) and hoped that no one else would have to die in the service of humanity.

36. While the risks to the personal safety of officials operating in a conflict situation might be avoidable with the emplacement of a number of security measures, that was not the case when staff members became victims of acts of violence or violation of their privileges and immunities by authorities of a State. The Charter obligations of Member States, as well as

(Mr. Lawson, Sierra Leone)

their responsibilities under international law, towards the officials of international organizations within their territory could not be overridden or abrogated unilaterally. The continuing practice of arrest, detention and abduction of officials was troubling. It was unacceptable that so many staff members from the United Nations system should remain incarcerated for long periods, while their respective executive heads could not exercise the right of protection. Unless Member States were willing to discharge their international legal responsibilities towards staff members, they encouraged, by their conduct, similar practices by irregular forces across the world. His delegation strongly deplored the recent abduction of United Nations personnel by the Charles Taylor faction in Liberia as well as the killing, by his forces, of several nuns engaged in humanitarian activities. Equally, however, his delegation recognized that staff members were under an obligation to obey the laws of their host country.

37. Where probable cause was shown in a matter involving a Member State and an official of any international organization, the Member State should give every guarantee that due process would be followed, the official being provided with proper legal representation and any requisite medical attention. With respect to officials detained or abducted by irregular forces, he appealed to those who were in a position to do so to exert their influence on the parties concerned to secure their release. It went without saying that where officials were victims of random acts of violence, the host country authorities should take the necessary steps to bring the perpetrators to justice.

38. After reviewing the Secretary-General's proposals (A/C.5/47/14, sect. V), his delegation considered it appropriate for the United Nations Security Coordinator to appoint area coordinators in those countries where their presence would be an added protection for employees in the field. The need to issue uniform identification cards to staff at all duty stations could not be denied.

39. As the years passed, the Organization would come to require of the staff higher performance and greater output in broader and more varied areas of activity. Member States could contribute to the success of that enterprise by encouraging the maintenance of an environment that did not compromise integrity, undermine efficiency or adversely affect staff morale. The Organization's human resources policy should be to equip the personnel with a keener functional balance under stressful conditions, flexibility to tackle new responsibilities and an energetic disposition to complex issues. That was indispensable given the role of the Organization in the coming century.

40. Mr. da COSTA PEREIRA (Portugal) fully supported the views expressed by the representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Community and its member States on agenda item 112, but said that Portugal was particularly concerned at its low representation in posts subject to geographical distribution and at the policy-making level.

(Mr. da Costa Pereira, Portugal)

41. In the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/47/416), his country was shown as underrepresented for the third consecutive year, despite the competitive examinations held in April 1990. The waiting period between the dates of the examination, subsequent selection and recruitment was too long, and most candidates were no longer available for recruitment two years after the examination.

42. His delegation had supported the holding of competitive examinations at the P-3 level to ensure that the best qualified candidates were selected, and also to serve as a tool for improving the representation of Member States in the middle range of Professional posts. The criteria used by the Secretariat to select the Member States where examinations were held in 1992 were surprising. Two of those States were at the mid-point of their desirable ranges and very well represented at all levels. He wondered why they had been given such an opportunity when there were so many other countries in a less favourable situation. He would appreciate clarification from the Secretariat on the matter.

43. In its resolution 45/239 A, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in order to preserve the principles of equitable geographical distribution and rotation in the upper echelons of the Secretariat - i.e. at the Under-Secretary-General and Assistant Secretary-General levels - to ensure that equal opportunity was given to candidates of all Member States when making appointments to all posts in the upper echelons. He supported the restructuring of the Secretariat undertaken by the Secretary-General with a view to streamlining and making more effective a top-heavy bureaucracy, and hoped that, when making appointments, the Secretary-General would bear in mind the many resolutions concerning equitable distribution and rotation in the upper echelons.

44. Needless to say, his delegation upheld the principles of the Charter. It was vital to secure staff with the highest standards of competence, efficiency and integrity, and it was not credible that only the nationals of a few Member States could meet those high standards. Accordingly, equal opportunity should be given to candidates from all Member States.

45. Finally, he commended the United Nations staff for their dedication and hard work in responding to the ever-increasing demands placed on the Organization at the present time.

Ms. Rotheiser (Austria) took the Chair.

46. Mr. RAZVIN (Russian Federation) said that his delegation attached great importance to personnel questions, not only because personnel costs accounted for more than two thirds of budgetary expenditure, but also because in most cases the Secretariat staff members were highly qualified specialists representing all the regions of the world, who had accumulated global experience in dealing with a wide variety of problems.

(Mr. Razvin, Russian Federation)

47. As a new democracy, his country strongly adhered to the principle of the independence of the international civil service in accordance with the United Nations Charter, and, with regard to personnel matters, intended to participate in the work of international organizations on the basis of the established rules and standards, with a view to increasing the effectiveness of the organizations in the system.

48. Bearing in mind the multifaceted nature and scope of the tasks facing the Organization and the need to respond rapidly to newly emerging problems, United Nations personnel policies during the current period of Secretariat reform should be based on the need to ensure a high level of performance, competence and dedication, and on the capacity to concentrate staff resources rapidly when new problems needed to be tackled.

49. With regard to the report of the Secretary-General on career development at the United Nations (A/C.5/47/6), he supported the ideas underlying the concept of career development, especially those aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of United Nations activities as the responsibilities assigned to it continued to evolve and expand, and at developing such qualities as ingenuity, mobility and creative thinking. However, he had certain reservations and apprehensions regarding the overall thrust of the report.

50. First of all, there was a bias towards isolating Secretariat staff from the outside world. In particular, he was concerned at the intention to extend to the Professional category the option of recruiting internal candidates to fill posts at the lower levels, as well as a majority of posts in the upper echelons. That approach was liable to jeopardize the prinicple of the openness of the international civil service, and would also involve prohibitive costs for staff training and retraining. It was essential to comply strictly with the requirement contained in paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 45/239 A that equal opportunity should be given to internal and external candidates when filling posts at all levels. That was the only way of ensuring a really high level of efficiency in the Secretariat.

51. He was also dissatisfied with some elements of the proposed system of staff performance evaluation. It was not clear from the report how the "dead wood" problem, whose existence no one denied, would be addressed. Further details were also needed concerning the Secretariat's revision of the current performance evaluation system, which was far from perfect.

52. The majority of personnel management problems would not have arisen if there had been a reasonable correlation between the number of staff with permanent contracts and those employed under fixed-term contracts, as was the case in specialized agencies such as the World Health Organization. While not questioning the need for a core of permanent personnel in order to ensure continuity in the administrative structure, he believed that the present figure of 76 per cent of personnel with career appointments was a real impediment to greater efficiency within the Secretariat. That state of

(Mr. Razvin, Russian Federation)

affairs forced the Organization to impose frequent recruitment freezes, which, in the final analysis, denied staff incentives for individual career development and shifted the emphasis to an expensive formal training system.

53. Under those circumstances, it seemed appropriate to try to achieve in the near future an equal ratio of career appointments and fixed-term contracts throughout the Secretariat and, as a way of facilitating that task, to extend the freeze on career appointments for a further two or three years, or at least until an effective performance evaluation system was developed.

54. His delegation was justifiably concerned about the rights of staff on fixed-term contracts. Specifically, it was worried that the temporary recruitment freeze designed to achieve the necessary reduction in posts might significantly affect the representation of those Member States whose citizens worked mostly under fixed-term contracts. He would like to know approximately how long the recruitment freeze was going to last. He also believed that it would be useful to increase the number of fixed-term appointments based on secondment from government service and welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on that subject (A/C.5/46/9) which proposed a clear and simple system of legal arrangements for such appointments. Extensive use of secondment would provide flexibility in human resources management, make Member States assume greater responsibility for the candidates they seconded, and create the conditions for mutually enriching exchanges between the international and national civil services. At the same time, account should be taken of the interests of staff members, the Organization and the Member States concerned.

55. The report of the Secretary-General on improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (A/47/508) noted that the proportion of women staff members in the Secretariat was increasing at the rate provided for in the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997. It was feasible that the targets set for 1995 would be attained. His delegation was ready to encourage efforts to that end in any way possible, bearing in mind that the proper representation of women should not be achieved at the expense of the principle laid down in the Charter that staff should be appointed on the basis of the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity.

56. In the current complex international atmosphere, where the peace-keeping role of the United Nations had become much more important, strict observance by all Member States of the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and specialized agencies acquired renewed importance. Accordingly, his delegation welcomed document A/C.5/47/14 and approved of the measures under way to increase the safety and security of officials of the Organization and other agencies of the United Nations system.

57. He respected the views of the staff representatives (A/C.5/47/20) and attached due importance to their activities to protect the rights of staff and safeguard their security. At the same time, it could not accept attempts by

(Mr. Razvin, Russian Federation)

those representatives to intervene in resolving specific staff problems which, under the Charter, were the Secretary-General's exclusive prerogative.

58. The Russian Federation was ready to cooperate with the delegations of all Member States and with the senior members of the Secretariat in elaborating measures designed to make the work of the staff and the whole Organization more efficient.

59. Mr. KOVACIC (Slovenia) said that the Secretary-General's report on the composition of the Secretariat (A/47/416) offered a thorough overview of the representation of Member States and of recruitment activities, but also contained information that gave cause for outright concern. According to paragraph 15, as at 30 June 1992, there were 29 unrepresented Member States, as compared with 9 only a year before. The 19 recently admitted Member States, including Slovenia, were unrepresented. Decisive action should be taken to enable those new Members to receive their share of the posts subject to geographical distribution in the United Nations Secretariat.

60. Slovenia was genuinely interested in having its nationals occupy posts in the Secretariat. To achieve that, the first necessary step was to designate its desirable range, which was expected to be determined at the current session of the General Assembly on the basis of already established criteria.

61. Some delegations might perhaps question the existing criteria and methodology for determining desirable ranges. As several speakers had pointed out, those ranges were only a means of achieving equitable geographical distribution. Slovenia shared the view that discussing the methodology would be to no avail so long as the Secretariat did not succeed in bringing the majority of Member States within their desirable ranges.

62. The suspension of recruitment since February 1992, in addition to impeding efforts to improve geographical distribution, constituted an obstacle to the future representation of unrepresented Member States. Accordingly, he believed that, even during the ongoing restructuring effort, the recruitment of nationals of unrepresented - and eventually even underrepresented - Member States should be exempted from the freeze. His delegation would like to hear comments from the Secretariat on the possibilities of recruiting nationals of newly admitted and other underrepresented States. Clearly, national competitive examinations could not be the only answer to the question, given the length of the recruitment process and the relative inaccessibility to more senior posts.

63. It was also regrettable that, while 29 Member States had not a single representative in the Secretariat, the number of overrepresented Member States had increased over the past three years from 19 in 1990 to 24 in 1992. The Secretariat should provide an explanation of the considerations that had led to that development. It was also hard to comprehend why, of the 128 appointments made to occupy posts subject to geographical distribution during

(Mr. Kovacic, Slovenia)

the reporting period, only 29, or 22.7 per cent, had been nationals of unrepresented or underrepresented countries.

64. Turning to the representation of women in the Secretariat, he said that, in its resolution 45/239 C, the General Assembly had urged the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to increase the number of women in posts subject to geographical distribution, particularly in senior policy-level and decision-making posts, in order to achieve an overall participation rate of 30 per cent by the end of 1990 and, to the extent possible, 35 per cent by 1995. He noted with satisfaction that the proportion of women in the Secretariat was steadily increasing. According to the Secretary-General (A/47/416 and A/47/508), as at 30 June 1992, women occupied 797, or 30.56 per cent of posts subject to geographical distribution, an increase of 1.4 per cent from the previous year. However, there were no women at the Under-Secretary-General level, only one Assistant Secretary-General, and only 10 women at the D-2 level. Although there had been a substantial increase in the number of women at the D-1 level, further efforts should be made to achieve a higher percentage of women in senior posts in the Secretariat.

65. The picture of the overall representation of women was much less favourable when it was realized that, currently, 69 Member States had no women in posts subject to geographical distribution. The Secretariat should give priority to the recruitment of women from unrepresented and underrepresented States.

66. The formulation of a comprehensive career development plan had been the focus of attention of the Secretariat and the Fifth Committee for several years. He supported the integrated concept of career development and noted with interest the new proposals submitted in that area. It was important to adopt a dynamic approach to human resources management, providing for structuring the career of Secretariat staff from recruitment to their departure from service. Clearly, the proposed concept was to limit external recruitment at levels P-4 to D-2 to a minimum. The career development plan should not become a pretext for a practical freeze on external recruitment. A high level of staff efficiency, competence and integrity could be achieved not only through permanent training and a verifiable system of performance evaluation for staff already in service, but also through steady external recruitment on the basis of clearly defined guidelines.

67. With regard to the safety and security of personnel, it was most disturbing to learn that, at a time when the Organization was being entrusted with new tasks of an increasingly complex nature, even minimum standards of safety and security could not always be ensured. Although cases of detention and ill-treatment of staff members had become less frequent, it was shocking that, in 1991, almost as many international civil servants had lost their lives while on mission as in all previous years put together. The safety and security of the staff was a joint responsibility of the organizations of the

(Mr. Kovacic, Slovenia)

United Nations system and they must provide the necessary back-up and contingency planning. However, it was only the help and cooperation of Member States that could ensure the safety of staff members and their families.

68. Ms. SHITAKHA (Kenya) spoke on the Secretary-General's reports on the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (A/47/508) and on respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and related organizations (A/C.5/47/14).

69. Kenya had already noted that it had been an assumption, and the hope of many, that one of the implicit objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women would be that the advancement of women would soon become an issue so accepted that public pronouncements would not be necessary. Clearly, that goal had not yet been reached, despite the modest 1.4 per cent increase of women in posts subject to geographical distribution in the period under review. Even more disturbing was the almost total absence of women in the upper echelons of the Organization where two women at the Under-Secretary-General level had lost their post in the last year and the one assistant secretary-general post occupied by a woman was scheduled for abolition as part of the relentless pursuit of reform without regard for its impact on personnel or programmes. Her delegation fully concurred with the views of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) on the impossibility of taking appropriate decisions on the restructuring exercise without knowledge of the full impact of the reforms already undertaken. In addition, the number of women at the D-2 level was unchanged. Although some progress had been made in the recruitment and promotion of women at the lower levels of the Secretariat, it was to be hoped that every effort would be made to ensure adequate participation of women in policy-level and decision-making posts.

70. The poor representation of African women in the Secretariat was of particular concern to her delegation. Africa as a whole had the second lowest representation, by region and sex, in Professional posts subject to geographical distribution: 16.8 per cent. Even more unfortunate was the fact that African women accounted for only 2.8 per cent of Professional staff overall and only 9.8 per cent of all women staff. Her delegation had already proposed in the Third Committee and now reiterated the proposal that, in addition to the Secretariat, other United Nations agencies should support an accelerated increase of the proportion of Africans on their staff and should provide resources for human resources development and capacity-building for African women. It was the responsibility of Member States to submit women candidates for recruitment and it was regrettable that attempts by Kenya to submit women candidates had been thwarted by the current recruitment freeze in the Secretariat. The Kenyan delegation joined other delegations in requesting that the freeze should be only temporary and that, when it was lifted, priority should be given to the recruitment of women from developing countries and other countries adversely affected by the current restructuring exercise.

71. On the issue of career development her delegation fully agreed with the Secretariat approach to training and promotion of staff. It was of course of

(Ms. Shitakha, Kenya)

paramount importance to have an effective performance evaluation system to ensure fair and impartial promotion of staff throughout the system. That was of particular importance at a time when many staff members had seen a dramatic increase in their workload with no apparent appreciation of their efforts. An effective performance evaluation system, coupled with promotion opportunities, would go some way to restore staff morale. In addition Kenya supported the implementation of a mobility system with adequate incentives to encourage staff to take up posts throughout the United Nations system. The comments of the European Community deserved consideration in that regard.

72. On the question of the privileges and immunities of the officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies and related organizations, the Kenyan delegation fully shared the concerns expressed by the Secretary-General, by the former Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, and by the Legal Counsel at the continued and increased risks which staff members were forced to face in the discharge of their duties. Kenya was the host country to important United Nations offices and had taken and would continue to take every measure necessary to ensure the security and protection of United Nations staff in its territory. However, some tragedies were unfortunately inevitable. Her delegation reiterated its regret at the death during an armed robbery of Mr. Avi Rappaport, a staff member of the International Civil Aviation Organization. It assured the Secretary-General that the Kenyan Government had taken the issue very seriously and had introduced additional precautionary measures for the safety of United Nations staff in Nairobi. It also thanked the UNICEF staff for its condolences over the deaths of UNICEF staff members, including a Kenyan national, in Sudan in September 1992.

73. Kenya wished to express its deep concern over the erroneous reporting which appeared in the note on the views of the staff representatives of the United Nations Secretariat (A/C.5/47/20). According to that document Kenya had detained three staff members of UNRWA who, as her delegation understood it, had not been in the African continent at all. UNRWA itself had expressed surprise at the accusations and confirmed that the information was false. With regard to another alleged detention, the Secretary-General's report clearly indicated that it was a case of detention of a Kenyan national in a neighbouring country, and the third allegation had been overtaken by events. Although her delegation appreciated and accepted the apologies offered by the President of the United Nations Staff Committee for the inaccuracies, it urged the staff representatives to be more careful in future reports. It also looked forward to the issue of an official corrigendum.

74. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Community, said that the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations were accorded not for the personal benefit of officials but in order to facilitate the functioning of the Organization. During the reporting period the incidence of new cases of arrest and detention of United Nations officials had been lower

(Mr. Stitt, United Kingdom)

than in previous years but it remained unacceptably high. In addition, as of the date of the report, 11 staff members had been killed in the performance of their duties. Such violations contravened the principles of the Charter and international conventions and they aroused deep concern. The States members of the European Community wished to reiterate their particular concern over the fate of Mr. Alec Collett, kidnapped in Lebanon in March 1985.

75. They appealed once more to the Governments involved to put an end to all violations of the privileges and immunities of international staff so that they could exercise fully their functions, and they supported the constant efforts of the Secretary-General to ensure the implementation of international agreements relating to the privileges and immunities of international organizations and their staff, and his numerous appeals to all Member States to back him in his efforts.

76. The States members of the European Community shared the general concern for the safety of peace-keeping personnel and other staff members, particularly those involved in humanitarian relief operations. They also supported the use of independent medical teams, whenever the need arose, on the basis of the principle that all persons detained or imprisoned should be entitled to medical care and treatment.

77. Mrs. JONSDOTTIR-WARD (Iceland), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Iceland), said that they wished to focus attention on four areas of particular importance: (a) the recruitment and employment of staff; (b) career development; (c) the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat; and (d) respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations.

78. It was essential to ensure the equitable geographical representation of all Member States in order to preserve the international character of the United Nations, and there were three main criteria for doing so: membership, population and contribution.

79. The Nordic countries also supported the system of competitive examinations for the recruitment of young highly qualified women and men and welcomed the expansion of the system to cover P-3 posts. However, the recruitment process should be speeded up, for currently it could take up to a whole year after the holding of the examination.

80. Internal candidates should remain the primary source of recruitment to senior posts, both in the General Service and in the Professional category, with the principle of equitable geographical distribution always kept in mind.

81. It was essential to recruit qualified staff, but it was equally essential to retain well-qualified and motivated staff members. The comprehensive career development system for all categories of staff was therefore important, for it would enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations and offer staff

(Mrs. Jonsdottir-Ward, Iceland)

members opportunities for personal satisfaction. In order to ensure the success of the system, it was important to evaluate not only training activities but also management performance. The Nordic countries would welcome a more consistent system-wide human resources management policy which would facilitate staff mobility and career development among the various United Nations organizations, promoting improved team spirit throughout the system. They would also welcome the introduction of more competitive conditions of service and the adoption of personnel guidelines which took into account family situations, cultural differences and the special needs of women staff members.

82. The United Nations had a key role to play in the advancement of women, and the General Assembly had established the target of 35 per cent for women in Professional posts subject to geographical distribution by 1995. The Secretary-General's report indicated that the proportion of women in such posts had increased by 1.4 per cent between 1991 and 1992 and that in order to achieve the 1995 target the annual increase would have to exceed one per cent. The Nordic countries welcomed the fact that in 1992 approximately 40 per cent of the personnel recruited at the P-2/P-3 level had been women. However, progress was slow, especially with respect to the number of women at the higher levels. The obstacles confronting women candidates must be removed and the recruitment of women to senior posts augmented, thereby increasing their presence in decision-making positions. Governments could help by identifying qualified candidates in their countries and encouraging them to apply for vacant posts.

83. The Nordic delegations welcomed the measures announced by the Secretary-General addressing the issue of sexual harassment as well as the establishment of specific procedures and guidelines governing the handling of such charges.

84. The Nordic countries continued to support the Secretary-General in his efforts to ensure respect for the privileges and immunities of officials of the United Nations and related organizations. It was unacceptable that the safety and security of so many staff members were at such risk. In 1992 there had been 13 fatalities and an unacceptably high number of arbitrary arrests and detentions. Those occurrences were the responsibility of host Governments, which must maintain order and protect persons within their jurisdiction. The Nordic countries strongly appealed to the Governments concerned to respect their international obligations.

85. Mr. BARIMANI (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that with the end of the cold war a new era of international cooperation had emerged, and the Organization faced new challenges in the fields of peace-keeping and peacemaking. Those added demands and expectations, particularly at a time of limited financial resources, made it necessary for the Organization to manage its human resources more efficiently.

(Mr. Barimani, Islamic Republic of Iran)

86. The comprehensive career development plan, while it provided a fairly accurate description of various components of a sound personnel plan, fell short of proposing the initiatives needed to improve personnel policies in the area of career development. Owing to the freeze on recruitment and promotion in the Secretariat, there were currently vacancies at all levels involving posts which had been redeployed from their original programmes to other programmes or which remained in the pool of vacancies established by the Secretary-General for later use. Needless to say, under normal circumstances those posts could have been used for promotion, mobility and fresh recruitment from outside, thus promoting career development within the Secretariat. The question arose of how the Secretary-General planned to use the vacancies, particularly if the recruitment freeze was to continue. If the posts were to be filled on the basis of short-term contracts or by consultants, he wondered what assurances could be given regarding equitable geographical representation.

87. He wished to receive from the Secretariat a complete list of consultants currently serving in the Secretariat, indicating their rank, area of employment, nationality and duration of contract. He would also welcome more detailed information on those programmes of activity which, for lack of resources, had been neglected or discontinued. A simple calculation indicated that although peace-keeping and related humanitarian activities had increased many times over in recent years the staffing of the Organization had been reduced by some 20 to 25 per cent. Accordingly, his delegation was concerned about the impact of current policies on the morale and performance of the staff, they being two of the most important ingredients of personnel planning and career development within the Secretariat.

88. His delegation attached great importance to the system of desirable ranges and to the relative weights of the membership, contribution and population factors in determining the number of posts allotted to each Member State. The importance of the population factor should be increased and parity should be established between the membership and contribution factors. Further, he sought clarification of why the number of posts allotted to the Islamic Republic of Iran had remained unchanged whereas its contribution to the regular budget had increased from 0.69 to 0.77 per cent.

89. Although the number of unrepresented countries had increased, mainly as a result of the admission of new Members, the number of underrepresented States had declined. That latter trend should continue.

90. The increase in the representation of women in the Secretariat gave cause for satisfaction, but greater efforts should be made to attain by 1995 the 35 per cent target established in the relevant General Assembly resolutions. Special attention should also be given to recruiting qualified women from developing countries.

91. In the process of reform and restructuring, special measures should be taken in order not to affect those countries which were underrepresented or

(Mr. Barimani, Islamic Republic of Iran)

within range. If any posts were going to be cut, the process should start with the nationals of overrepresented countries.

92. His delegation noted with concern that the number of cases of arrest and detention of United Nations officials remained high, particularly in the case of UNRWA. As indicated in document A/C.5/47/14, UNRWA staff had continued to experience difficulties in entering and leaving the West Bank and Gaza Strip. His delegation requested the Secretary-General to give priority to prompt follow-up in cases of arrest and detention and in other matters relating to the security and proper functioning of UNRWA and other agencies.

93. While recognizing the value of competitive examinations to recruit staff at the P-2 and P-3 levels, his delegation believed that they should not constitute an impediment to recruitment from unrepresented and underrepresented countries.

94. The Islamic Republic of Iran was among those countries that were not adequately represented in the Secretariat. He thus hoped that, in future recruitment, the Secretary-General would make every effort to give priority to nationals from those Member States that were not yet within their desirable range.

95. Mr. SOH (Republic of Korea) said that his delegation supported the Secretary-General's proposals to maximize the efficiency of the Secretariat and the United Nations.

96. While in principle his delegation supported the steps taken by the Secretary-General to freeze recruitment at more senior levels and to recruit candidates at junior levels through national examinations to be held every three years, the fact that such a policy might unfairly affect unrepresented or underrepresented States gave cause for concern. Korean nationals were participating for the first time in national examinations. He expected that four or five successful candidates would soon join the Secretariat at the P-2 level. They would, however, represent only about one sixth of the posts allowed Korean nationals under the weighted points system governing the allotment of staff positions among Member States (A/47/416, table 10).

97. Special consideration should be paid in the recruitment process to unrepresented or underrepresented States in order to achieve equitable geographical distribution. It was to be hoped that the Secretariat would pay particular attention to new Member States so that their allocation of posts could be filled as soon as possible. In that connection it might be helpful to make exceptions to the recruitment freeze so that the nationals of new Member States could be placed in high-level positions to which they would otherwise not have access.

(Mr. Soh, Republic of Korea)

98. Examinations for P-3 posts were an ideal means of enlisting highly qualified persons and, given the successful holding of such examinations in 1991 and 1992, they should be held on an annual basis for new Member States.

99. United Nations staff members should be given an opportunity to make full use of their abilities in serving the Organization, to which end career development was particularly important. He hoped that the pilot project for the administrative occupational group and the subsequent application of the system to all categories would have positive results, and he noted the importance of providing United Nations staff with a long-term career development mechanism.

100. The progress so far made regarding the status of women in the Secretariat was welcome, although much remained to be done, particularly in placing women in posts at the D-2 level and above. His delegation supported the follow-up measures taken and endorsed the targets announced by the Secretary-General at the 21st meeting.

101. The Republic of Korea shared the concern over the security of United Nations officials, especially those working in the field, often in conflict situations, and hoped that they would be assured all possible means of security in the future. Today, when increasing numbers of United Nations staff were being asked to fulfil duties in potentially dangerous areas, their protection must be seen as a priority objective. That they were on occasion denied entry, held captive, denied visas or otherwise impeded from carrying out their work was cause for international opprobrium. Appropriate measures to ensure their safety should be considered further.

102. In order to revitalize the Organization after decades of inactivity, every effort should be made to introduce the ablest individuals into the system, with due regard for geographical distribution. Thereafter those individuals must be allowed to realize their full potential within the United Nations so that their skills and experience could be relied on to carry the Organization into a new era of peace and prosperity.

103. Mr. MAIGA (Mali) said that the debate on personnel questions was taking place as the Organization was considering questions that would shape its future activities: the strengthening of the role of the Organization in the maintenance of international peace and security, the strengthening of the role of the United Nations system in international cooperation and development, the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations and the strengthening of the means available to the Organization in the field of preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution.

104. In order to translate those objectives into programmes of activities that could be implemented the cooperation of every staff member in the Organization was needed. For there to be a viable and lasting improvement in administrative efficiency within the Secretariat, qualitative changes in working conditions, career development and staff training must be introduced.

(Mr. Maiga, Mali)

105. His delegation welcomed the proposals advanced by the Secretary-General in his report on the training programme in the Secretariat (A/C.5/47/9) regarding the training of personnel for peace-keeping duties. Particular emphasis should be placed on the training of staff in development activities and emergency relief.

106. The progress attained in the implementation of the various resolutions on the composition of the Secretariat should be measured against the principles of universality and equitable geographical distribution. While his delegation welcomed the progress made in applying those principles, corrective action was needed to end imbalances arising from the overrepresentation, underrepresentation and non-representation of some States. To that end, competitive examinations for posts at the P-1 and P-2 levels should be held in underrepresented countries.

107. Measures should also be taken to increase the level of representation of women in the Secretariat, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 45/125 and 45/239 C. In addition, particular emphasis should be placed on the recruitment and promotion of women from underrepresented regions, such as the countries of Africa. The report of the Secretary-General on the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat (A/47/508) indicated that the percentage of women from the countries of Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe was much lower than the current overall percentage of 30 per cent. In June 1992 there had been 69 Member States, including Mali, which had had no women in posts subject to geographical distribution.

108. Mali paid tribute to the staff of the United Nations who, both at Headquarters and in field offices, had spared no effort to advance, sometimes at the cost of their own lives, the noble ideals of the Organization.

109. Mr. DJACTA (Algeria) said that the vast process of structural and operational reform under way in the Organization had transformed some aspects of its most sensitive sector, the human element.

110. The reform process involved an improvement in the structure and functioning of the Secretariat and the modernization of personnel management. There was no doubt that that could be done while respecting and strengthening the principle of equitable geographical distribution so as to ensure proportional representation.

111. The scheme of desirable ranges used to calculate the representation of each Member State should be amended, since the three factors taken into account - membership, contribution and population - were, in the view of his delegation, restrictive. It would be preferable to devise other means that could correct the current imbalance.

112. Career development was a priority issue. An overall career development plan should be formulated as soon as possible along the lines recommended by

(Mr. Djacta, Algeria)

the General Assembly. Renewed consideration should be given to the composition and functioning of the internal appointment and promotion bodies with a view to improving transparency and coherence. In addition, account must be taken of the fact that the necessary restructuring was adding to uncertainty within the Secretariat. The process should be accompanied by greater recognition of the international civil service and greater respect for those who served in it.

113. If the aim was to create a stronger, more independent and more efficient Secretariat, with the ability to respond flexibly to new demands and changing mandates, it was necessary to establish a simpler hierarchical structure and better define responsibilities, while simplifying procedures and ending pointless practices.

114. The improvement of conditions of service, including recruitment policies, the structure of the different categories and career development for all categories of staff, would undoubtedly help to improve efficiency within the Secretariat.

115. The status of women in the Secretariat continued to preoccupy Member States. Recruitment had brought the figure to 30.6 per cent of the total, according to the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/47/416). The situation was encouraging, since the target of 35 per cent by 1995 was close to being attained. Nevertheless, there was scant representation of women from developing countries, particularly of African women, who represented only 2.8 per cent of the total number of staff. His delegation attached particular importance to intensifying efforts to increase the number of staff members from developing countries in higher-level posts within the Organization.

116. As stated by other delegations, all cases of alleged sexual harassment within the Secretariat must be thoroughly investigated.

117. Training was an essential element in improving the professional skills of the staff, whose duties were becoming ever more complex and numerous in discharging the mandates entrusted to the Organization. Particular attention must be paid to training, to which substantial resources must be allocated.

118. On 11 September 1992, Staff Day, the Secretary-General had said that the wealth of the United Nations lay in its staff. It followed that to act against the interests of the staff of the United Nations and against their career development was tantamount to destroying the Organization.

OTHER MATTERS

119. Mr. AL-MAKTARI (Yemen) said that the importance of the statement delivered by the Secretary-General at the 21st meeting of the Committee was

(Mr. Al-Maktari, Yemen)

such that it should be circulated in the six official languages of the United Nations.

120. Following an exchange of views in which Mr. INOMATA (Japan), Mr. CLAVIJO (Colombia), Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands), Mr. TANG Guangting (China), Mr. AHMED (Iraq), Mr. RAZVIN (Russian Federation), Ms. ERIKSSON FOGH (Sweden), Mr. BARIMANI (Islamic Republic of Iran), Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal), Mrs. SHITAKHA (Kenya) and Mr. KINCHEN (United Kingdom) took part, the CHAIRMAN suggested that the Secretariat should be requested to record the Secretary-General's statement in extenso in the summary record of the 21st meeting, and that the record should be circulated as soon as possible.

121. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 7.45 p.m.